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# OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

Maj. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III



We did it! We met our end-of-the-year goal, ending the year with 7,199 Soldiers, which represents a net gain of 797 new enlistments from March 21, 2005. I can't begin to express how proud I am of every member of this great organization for your untiring efforts and dedication to duty in accomplishing this monumental task.

Everyone was involved and focused. The MSCs all the way down the chain contributed and what about our Recruiting and Retention Force who worked countless hours, setting record recruiting months. It was a team effort throughout, and I salute all of you for your selfless work to putting us in the green.

Because of our recruiting success, we are positioned pretty well and could be primed for additional force structure in the coming years with our pending reorganization to an artillery fires brigade and infantry brigade combat team, and several changes to the 90th Troop Command.

We can't let down. There is still much to be done before we are completely out of the woods. Stay focused! This includes the Air National Guard, too. As the Air National Guard transforms, the states that show 100 percent end strength will prosper. Oklahoma needs to be "in the green".

On Saturday, September 16, I had the honor of attending a ceremony in which Army Vice-Chief of Staff, Gen. Richard A. Cody awarded Spc. Christon Stone with the Purple Heart for wounds she received last month in Iraq. Spc. Stone was one of five 1345th Transportation Soldiers injured Aug. 23 by an improvised explosive device near Mosel. She and Spc. Matt Herndon were evacuated to Army hospitals at Ft. Sam Houston and Ft. Bliss respectively for further treatment. Sgt. Kelsey Birdsall, Sgt. Larhonda Johnson, and Spc. Jacob McNeely, also injured, remain in Iraq.

Spc. Stone's courage and her desire to continue service to our state and nation should be an inspiration to all of us...it certainly was to me. During the course of this Global War on Terror several of our Guard members have received the Purple Heart for injuries sustained in combat. America owes you a debt of gratitude that can never really be repaid. Your sacrifice to protect this nation will always be remembered.

All of theses Soldiers are heroes certainly. But I also think that it takes a certain amount of courage to raise your right hand and take the oath to be a member of the Oklahoma National Guard. Thanks to all members of the Oklahoma National Guard for your courage, dedication, and professionalism.

# Operation Iraqi Freedom Director of the state of the sta

1st Battalion, 158th Field Artillery (MLRS)

Approximately 150 Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 158th Field Artillery (MLRS) were mobilized for deployment training at Fort Lewis, Wash. The unit deployed overseas in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and are currently serving in Iraq. The Soldiers will assist in security operations while deployed.

#### 1345th Transportation Company

The 1345th has deployed to Iraq as a transportation company in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 1345th is scheduled to return in the Spring of 2007.

#### **Operation Enduring Freedom**

1st Battalion, 180th Infantry

The 180th has deployed to Afghanistan as part of a multinational task force whose mission is to train and mentor Soldiers in the new Afghan National Army. Members of the 180th Infantry are providing security for the international coalition of trainers and the Afghan trainees.

#### 245th Engineer Company

About 150 Soldiers are currently participating in pre-deployment training and Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) at Ft. Dix, N.J. The training will be similar to that given to military police officers and will prepare the Soldiers for their mission in Iraq.



The Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III

Public Affairs Officer COL Pat Scully

Administrative Assistant Cheryl Thomas

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FRONTLINE STAFF LTC John Altebaumer SFC Kendall James SGT Claudia Bullard Oklahoma Frontline falls under the supervision of the Headquarters, Joint Force Command, Oklahoma National Guard, and is published monthly.

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# Oklahomans remember 9/11 and Murrah bombing through Freedom Walk Story and photo by 1st Lt. Geoff Legler, Oklahoma Army National Guard Office of Public Affairs

With the sun hanging low in the western sky, Oklahomans of all ages assembled at the Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial.

They came to this sacred ground to remember those who lost their lives to terrorism.

They came on the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks to participate in the Oklahoma City Freedom Walk, a commemorative event about remembrance of the Sept. 11 victims, reflection on the tragedy of that day, recommitment to the ideals of freedom that epitomize the United States its promise to "never forget," and respect and support for the many American men and women in uniform past and present who protect our freedom.

The 145th Army Band played for the crowd as the delegation of dignitaries, including Oklahoma Gov. Brad Henry and his wife, Kim; former Gov. Frank Keating and his wife, Kathy; and Oklahoma Army National Guard Chief Warrant Officer Ronald Petty took the stage.

As the dignitaries took their seats, many of the Freedom Walkers were visibly shaken while recalling the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building that killed 168 people here and the Sept. 11 attacks.

"The events of 9/11 forever changed the nation, but certainly it was not the first instance of America responding to the evils of terrorism," Henry said. "On April 19, 1995, Oklahoma and the rest of the nation learned a grim lesson that terror can strike anywhere and at anytime. In light of the link between Sept. 11, 2001, in New York City, Washington, D.C.and Pennsylvania, and April 19, 1995, in Oklahoma

City, it is only fitting that the Freedom Walk begins from the Oklahoma City National Memorial.

"The Freedom Walk gives Oklahomans an opportunity to demonstrate their solidarity and honor the victims of terrorism, as well as the military troops, police and firefighters involved in the ongoing mission to keep the American people safe and secure," he continued. "The Freedom Walk sends a simple but powerful and eloquent message: The United States stands

Guard's 138th Fighter Wing flew by. As the jets flew over the horizon, a large American flag was unfurled from the roof of the Oklahoma City National Memorial Museum.

Many felt Chief Warrant Officer Petty, whose son died in Iraq, was the most inspiring and touching speaker of the night. He spoke about what his son, Army Staff Sgt. Eric Petty, saw during the 57 weeks he served in Iraq before being killed.

Petty detailed how his son



Chief Warrant Officer Ronald Petty, a full-time Oklahoma Army National Guardsman, speaks to the crowd about his son's experiences as a Soldier in Iraq. Petty's son, Staff Sgt. Eric Petty, was killed by small arms fire on May 3, 2004, while providing security at a weapons cache in Salman Al Habb, Iraq.

together and strong, and we will not be cowered by terrorism."

Keating, who was Oklahoma governor at the time of the Murrah Building attack, also spoke at the event. "We are one people; we care for one another; we defend one another; we love one another; and we will not tolerate the destruction of innocent human life for any purpose," he said.

Following Keating's comments, the crowd sang "God Bless America" as four F-16 Fighting Falcons from the Oklahoma Air National

and the squad he led saw signs of progress in Iraq. "We have done something here in Iraq that has given the people of Iraq a very small taste of what we have in America," Petty said his son once told him. He said his son also told him that Iraqis would come out of their homes and thank the Soldiers for what they had done.

"We are doing good things in Iraq, and my son was one of the Soldiers who made a difference," Petty said.

After the ceremony, the dignitaries led the crowd through

the east gate of the Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial and onto Robinson Avenue. Behind them were the Oklahoma National Guard color guard, cadets from the Thunderbird Youth Academy and hundreds of Oklahoma Guardsmen and their families. Members of the community fell in behind the Guardsmen, and the line of walkers stretched for more than half a mile.

As Oklahoma Army National Guard Pfc. Jessica Watkins walked through downtown Oklahoma City with her fellow Guardsmen, she remembered the attack on the World Trade Center five years ago. "I wanted to come out as part of the community and do my part," said Watkins, who returned from basic training only two months ago.

Even though she is a new Soldier, Watkins said she understands her duty to her country. "I'll do what I am called upon to do," she said, adding that she was "absolutely inspired" by the day's events.

At the walk's end at the Bricktown Events Center. walkers were greeted by numerous well-wishers and entertained by local band "The Great Divide" and singer Luke Strickland.

"This Freedom Walk demonstrates the resolve of the United States and its citizens to fight terrorism wherever it may exist," Oklahoma's adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt, said at the end of the event. "As Oklahomans, we have all had to deal with the pain and grief that an act of terror leaves behind, but as we fight to protect the American way of life, we must never forget those who have died both at home and abroad in the name of freedom."

### Freedom Walk



Photos by: Col. Pat Scully, 1st Lt. Geoff Legler & Sgt. 1st Class Kendall James

# Muskogee VA Medical Center unveils women veteran's memorial Story and photos by Sgt. Claudia Bullard, Oklahoma Army National Guard Office of Public Affairs

On a bright July morning a group of women veterans gathered before the main entrance of the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Muskogee. The day was already hot and humid, a typical morning for eastern Oklahoma, but the women, some much along in years, took their places in folding chairs and on the steps, fanning themselves with programs.

They have come to see the unveiling of a monument which lies in the garden before them. It does not typify the larger veteran's monuments around the United States and certainly is not on the scale of the National Women's Memorial in Arlington, Virginia. It is an unassuming granite square simply inscribed "Women in Military Service for America."

But to these Oklahoma women, neither its size nor lack of conventionality diminishes its relevance. What is most important is the opportunity to have a place to come together to find meaning in their common experience—something that has been long overshadowed by that of their male counterparts.

"We felt this is an honor to all Oklahoma women veterans," said Yevonne Kielty, Muskogee VAMC public relations officer. "Although the marker is simple, it expresses our desire to recognize women veterans for their contributions and sacrifices that have inspired all of us."

Oklahoma Air National Guard Maj. Gen. Rita Aragon who attended the unveiling agreed, calling the memorial "one



Irene Ward, 80, bows her head during the invocation at the dedication of the women veteran's memorial at the Muskogee Veterans Administration Medical Center. Ward was enlisted in the Women's Auxiliary Corps in WWII as a company clerk and was assigned to Eisenhower's headquarters. Her husband was in the 179th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Division. Both were deployed to the European theater.



An unidentified veteran scatters rose petals on the newly-dedicated women veteran's memorial at the Muskogee Veterans Administration Medical Center. The memorial and dedication ceremony brought many veterans together for remembrance and closure to their experiences during both Korea, world wars. Vietnam, Desert Storm and current operations in the Middle East.

of the very few recognitions that women veterans have received in the United States."

"It's good to know our service is recognized and today we are recognized as a group," said Aragon adding the Oklahoma National Guard has been a leader in helping locate and record the information of the nation's women veterans.

Oklahoma women veterans were specifically lauded in Muskogee City Mayor Wren Stratton's recent proclamation that praised them saying "Oklahoma daughters have contributed immensely to the objectives of our state and national military efforts" and urged citizens to recognize

"their valued service and sacrifices to our country".

Lynda Waldroop, Oklahoma state women veteran's coordinator, agreed with the proclamation saying Oklahoma women veterans "came from pioneer stock" and have a history of "taking up arms to protect loved ones."

"Our history and honor goes on to future generations. Let us never forget to stand for what they sacrificed," said Waldroop.

After the program the women veterans walked past the memorial, each scattering a handful of rose petals across its face. It was a way of consecrating sacred ground, of claiming a place of their own.

#### HRO using new system to announce military technician positions

The Human Resources Office has begun implementing USA Staffing to announce all technician position vacancies in the Oklahoma National Guard. USA Staffing is a web-based system that will simplify the staffing process and will also allow our applicants to maintain their resume' on file for one time or repeated use. It is user-friendly software that automates the entire staffing process to include recruitment, assessment, referral and notification processes to applicants. The job announcements will remain displayed on our homepage. The USAJOBS (www.usajobs.opm.gov) link will direct the applicant to the USAJOBS site where they can begin the process. Our technician announcements will no longer be printed and distributed in hard copy as in the past. In order to view and apply for federal technician positions with the Oklahoma National Guard you will have to access USAJOBS the official site of the United States federal government for federal jobs and other employment

information. The Human Resources Office will have a dedicated computer for those not having access to a system.

On the Oklahoma Military Department Public Website (www.ok.ngb.army.mil) there are two documents concerning this new process; a memorandum and a Power-Point presentation.

If you have any questions, please call Chief Master Sgt. Cynthia Givens, 228-5559 or Marian Riedmann, 228-5216.

#### Three Oklahoma Army Guard Commanders receive liberating Army Award

Story by Sgt. Claudia Bullard, Oklahoma Army National Guard Office of Public Affairs

The day was April 29, 1945, and 157th Infantry Regiment Commander Lt. Col. Felix L. Sparks, received orders to proceed to the German city of Dachau. The city had not yet attained its notoriety for Nazi atrocities and the men of the 157th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry "Thunderbird" Division, were not aware of any unusual circumstances surrounding the mission.

Later Sparks recalled the scene that met them on the railroad tracks leading into the now infamous concentration camp.

"Our first experience with the camp came as a traumatic shock," said Sparks during a 1995 speech given at the U.S. Holocaust Museum. "The first evidence of the horrors to come was a string of forty railway cars on a railway spur leading into the camp. Each car was filled with emaciated human corpses, both men and women."

Once inside the camp, Spark's men found 30,000 starving inmates awaiting the Allies' arrival. Four thousand more lay in a moat, machine-gunned by the Hitler's SS upon news of the imminent arrival of the Americans. A typhus

epidemic was slowly taking the lives of the survivors. Besides the dead and dying, there was a gas chamber and a crematorium-all of it evidence of Hitler's Final Solution.

It was a scene Sparks and his men would never forget.

Today, more than 60 years later, the "Thunderbird Division" survives as the 45th Infantry Brigade of the Oklahoma Army National Guard and a new generation of Soldiers proudly carries in their hearts Gen. George S. Patton's words of praise:

"Born at sea, baptized in blood, your fame will never die, the 45th is one of the best, if not the best Division in the history of American arms."

Many of the Thunderbirds who served in WWII and earned that famous moniker have passed on. But their history hasn't.

Recently Brig. Gen. Myles Deering, 45th Infantry Brigade commander, attended a

Brig. Gen. Myles Deering, Commander of the 45th Infantry Brigade, (left) poses with Col. Kenneth Moore, Commander of 90th Troop Command (center) and Col. Robert Roshell, Commander of the 45th Field Artillery Brigade (right) during a tribute dinner for the Holocaust Liberator divisions in Boston.

tribute dinner for the Holocaust Liberator divisions in Boston, Mass., where he accepted an award on behalf of the present-day Brigade.

The dinner and awards ceremony was organized by The Holocaust Center whose mission is to "broaden public awareness, understanding and sensitivity to past and present human rights issues". Three members of the unit that liberated Dachau—Col. Edward Spears (Ret.), Col. Chan Rogers (Ret.) and Mr. Jack Hollowell—accepted a second award on behalf of Division veterans.

Deering, who sat with the three men, said it was a great honor to be able to talk to people who were there during the liberation. It's important that we hear their stories. As a country, we don't do enough for them."

Albert A. Mangone, a retired U.S. Army brigadier general who helped organize and emcee the event, agreed with Deering.

"It was long overdue to bring together most

of the concentration camp liberating divisions and to thank them in a group," said Mangone. "This needed to be done before the remainder of the WWII vets in those units pass on."

Gary Butler, president and general manager of Eastman Gelatine Corporation, and Human Resources Manager Tom Tardiff presented the two awards. Eastman Gelatine Corporation sponsored the 45th Division and Brigade representatives who included, besides Deering, Col. Kenneth Moore, 90th Troop Command, and Lt. Col. Robert Rochelle, commander, 45th Field Artillery Brigade, both assets of the OKARNG.

Deering characterized the importance of the award by pointing out

the history of the Oklahoma National Guard goes beyond the individual.

"In this case pride doesn't come from the rank you wear but in the fact you share the unit history," said Deering, adding "anyone who has been in the 45th is tremendously proud of its heritage."

"The reason and purpose for this award," said Deering, "is to remind us of what happened at Dachau and that the 45th is there to serve as a hedge against anything like that happening again."

### Oklahoma Soldier receives Purple Heart for wounds received in Iraq Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Darren D. Heusel, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Oklahoma Army National Guard

SAN ANTONIO – U.S. Army Spc. Christon Stone winced in obvious pain Saturday, no doubt still reeling from injuries she sustained when her convoy came under attack Aug. 23 in Iraq.

But Spc. Stone, seated in a wheelchair and dressed in the Army PT uniform, mustered just enough strength to come on stage and receive the Purple Heart Medal from Gen. Richard A. Cody, vice chief of staff of the Army, during a somber ceremony at Brooke Army Medical Center.

Spc. Stone, a member of the 1345th Transportation Company, Oklahoma Army

National Guard, was one of six Soldiers to receive the Purple Heart from Gen. Cody in the Sept. 16 ceremony.

The 21-year-old Oklahoma City native is believed to be the first female and one of about 40 Oklahoma Soldiers to receive the award due to combat operations following the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the East Coast.

I'm really here for the Soldiers and their families," Gen. Cody told a packed crowd in the Brooke Army Medical Center auditorium. "As the parent of someone who's sent two sons into combat, I know what they're going through.

"I wish I didn't have to be here to present these Purple Hearts because it means that you have given part of yourself to this country. But it really is a badge of honor...and you will forever be in the annals of history as a Soldier of courage, a Soldier of bravery."

Spc. Stone was one of five members of the 1345th Transportation Company injured just after midnight Aug. 23 when the convoy in which they were riding struck an improvised explosive device while performing combat duties in Iraq.

According to the casualty report, the Soldiers were in the Mosul area riding in a M117 Armored Security Vehicle as part of a convoy en route to Forward Operating Base Endurance.

The vehicle had just passed a checkpoint where the road narrowed, triggering the IED and causing the vehicle to roll over.

"We got hit by an explosive force projectile and the next thing I knew there was this big wall of dirt," Spc. Stone said. "We went through it and ended up rolling over."

Spc. Stone said she was trapped in the burning vehicle for about 10 minutes before finally forcing one of the side hatches open and crawling out.

"I couldn't move and there was a time I thought I wasn't going to make it out alive," she said. "Finally, I heard someone calling

Maj. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III, Adjutant General for Oklahoma (right), thanks Spc. Christon Stone for her bravery under fire and for her service in the Oklahoma Army National Guard. Stone was injured on August 23rd, when the convoy she was traveling in was ambushed.

my name and that gave me hope."

Also injured in the attack were Spc. Mathew Herndon of Kingston, Sgt. Kelsey Birdsall of Stillwater, Sgt. Larhonda Johnson of Leon and Spc. Jacob McNeely of Gainsville, Texas.

Sgt. Birdsall, Sgt. Johnson and Spc. McNeely were all treated and returned to duty while Spc. Herndon, who suffered a fractured right arm and multiple shrapnel wounds to both forearms, returned to his home near Durant on Wednesday, Sept. 13, and will be on convalescent leave for an undetermined amount of time.

Following the attack, the injured Soldiers were initially taken to a coalition hospital at Forward Operating Base Diamondhead.

Spc. Stone arrived at Brooke Army Medi-

cal Center Aug. 25 and is currently residing in guest housing with her father, Staff Sgt. Devin Stone, a recruiter with the Oklahoma Army National Guard, and her stepmother, Wanda Stone.

"Young Christon Stone received some pretty tough injuries," Gen. Cody said. "It takes courage to be a convoy security person in this war. She's just a young Soldier, who says 'I've been there and as soon as I get well I want to continue to Soldier.'

"When I talk about bravery and courage, you don't have to look very far across the ranks of the United States Army and you

> see it every day. It's a significant pain and sacrifice these Soldiers have made for their country."

Gen. Cody went on to say when it comes to the contribution of the National Guard in the current effort; there is no difference between them, the reserve or the active duty component.

"It's all one force," he said. "We could not sustain a long campaign like we have right now without the commitment of the National Guard and the United States Army Reserve. We are one Army more than we ever have been.

"On the battlefield,

I'd challenge anybody to pick out who's active, who's reserve and who's Guard. There is no difference. They're well trained, well lead, well equipped and every one of them have the same morale courage and morale purpose."

According to Sgt. Stone, his daughter's recovery could take from six to 12 months. He said she received third degree burns from her waist down and has already undergone five skin graphs.

"We're down here (at Brooke) and we're seeing a lot worse (injuries)," Sgt. Stone said. "That's not to belittle what Christon is going through though."

Sgt. Stone said he attributes his daughter's good fortune, if you will, to the equipment

□ Continued on page 13

#### Former CSM of the Army elected as EANGUS president

During our national conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, EANGUS members had the opportunity to elect new officers for their great association. It was during this time that CSM (Ret) Frank Lever from South Carolina, was selected to lead the association for the next two years. CSM (Ret) Lever will serve as our fourteenth president and succeeds CMSgt (Ret) Ed Brown from Alabama.

In his last military assignment, CSM (Ret) Lever served as the seventh Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Director, Army National Guard. Prior to that he served as the South Carolina State Command Sergeant Major. CSM Lever served in several senior leadership positions with the National



Guard. He initially enlisted as a traditional enlisted Soldier in the South Carolina Army National Guard in 1969 upon graduating from The Citadel. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's degree in management. He has completed the United States Army Sergeants Major Course, the Quality Guard Consultants Course, and the Master Fitness Trainer Course. After 35 years of faithful, dedicated service CSM Lever retired from the military in 2005. Lever is a life member of EAN-GUS and the National Guard Association of South Carolina (NGASC). He also is a Past President of the NGASC. CSM (Ret) Lever and his wife, Ellen, have two sons and they reside in North Charleston, SC.

#### Congress returns to work after one month break

The Senate and House returned this week after a month long recess and the Senate resumed action on the FY07 Defense Appropriations Act and completed their action last evening (Sep 7th). The Senate voted 98-0 to pass the \$469.7 billion fiscal 2007 Defense spending bill (HR 5631), which includes \$66.1 billion in emergency spending for fighting the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and for border security. The Senate version will have to be reconciled with the House's \$427.6 billion spending

bill, which passed June 20. With the end of the fiscal year three weeks away, the Defense Appropriations members are hoping to complete the final bill before the end of September. Both the Senate and House Defense Authorization bills continue to be discussed in conference and are expected to be complete during the next couple weeks. EANGUS will keep you updated on the progress of these issues as we continue to monitor the Hill's actions closely.

#### New support to stop predatory lenders from targeting our troops

EANGUS attended a press conference Thurs, Sep 6, 2006, where Senator Jim Talent (MO) and Congressman Sam Graves (MO) announced that a bipartisan group of 31 Senators had sent a letter to Defense Authorization conferees urging them to maintain a provision to stop predatory lenders from targeting servicemembers and their families. In June, Senator Talent sponsored an amendment that passed as part of the Senate Defense Authorization bill to enact a 36 percent annual percentage rate (APR) cap on loans to servicemembers. This amendment is based on the Servicemember's Anti-Predatory Lending Protection Act (H.R. 97), legislation introduced by Congressman Graves. Last month, DoD released a report urging Congress to enact a 36% APR cap to servicemembers. With the Pentagon's report recommending a 36% APR cap, both Talent and Graves say "conferees should have no reason to oppose the provision".

#### NGAUS denounces apparent move to defer Guard empowerment

It appears the National Guard is, once again, being excluded from final discussions on a critical decision about its future.

At issue is language in the Senate version of the fiscal 2007 defense authorization bill that would elevate the National Guard Bureau chief to a four-star rank, thereby raising the Guard's stature within the Pentagon.

Senate authors crafted the provision in reaction to the Pentagon habitually leaving Guard leaders out of key Pentagon deliberations such as the recent Quadrennial Defense Review and last year's Base Realignment and Closure process.

But published reports yesterday indicate that House and Senate Armed Services committee leaders now want to ignore the

full Senate's intent and turn the matter over to the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, which won't issue any recommendations until late next year.

The issue is supposed to be settled by a larger group of lawmakers from both chambers in a conference committee, which is currently underway to settle other differences between the House and Senate versions of the defense authorization bill.

"This appears to be a decision by the leaders—not the conferees—to retain the broken status quo," said retired Brig Gen. Stephen M. Koper, NGAUS president. "The Guard is the only military organization with a dual mission. Yet, it has no voice at the highest levels of the Pentagon.

"The Senate, earlier this year, said,

'Enough," he continued. "They said, 'Enough ignoring the Guard in budget decisions and future planning.' It was a loud and clear message. Apparently, we now have a small minority trying to stifle that intent.

"If this small group gets its way," General Koper said, "Guardsmen performing missions around the country and around the world will have to wait two years at the earliest to get the voice they have not only earned, but desperately need.

"Congress needs to finish the effort started in the Senate and give Guardsmen that voice now," he said. "Lawmakers can always come back later and amend the law. But they can't come back and retroactively give the Guard a voice in Pentagon decisions already made."

#### **Equipment reimbursement deadline looms**

The Army's reimbursement claim filing deadline for the protective gear reimbursement program is Oct. 3.

Last year the Army began reimbursing Soldiers who purchased body armor and certain other protective, health and safety equipment for Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom.

A reimbursable purchase is a qualifying item bought after Sept. 10, 2001, and before April 2, 2006.

The Army reimburses a claimant for the full purchase price plus shipping costs for each item—up to \$1,100 for any single item—if proof of purchase is provided. Without it, the Defense Department reimburses at a rate pre-established for the item's category.

Soldiers are to file claims with the first field grade commander in their current chain of command.

Former Soldiers and deceased Soldiers'

survivors may file by mail to the U.S. Army Claims Service (USARCS) at the address in block 12 of the claims form, DD Form 2902.

The U.S. Army Claims Service in Fort Meade, Md., has received 138 Army claims, says Maj. Paul Cucuzzella, USARCS project officer. He estimates that 25 percent of those are Guard claims.

A few claims for items such as knives or scopes for M-16 rifles have been declined. Overall, "we've been liberal about approving claims," he said.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) will pay claimants after the USARCS processes the claims.

Current Soldiers receive direct deposits in their regular pay accounts; DFAS sends checks to the others.

To get the list of reimbursable items and download claim forms, visit www.jagcnet. army.mil

#### Pentagon to hold limited tours as before the 9/11 terrorist attacks

As the fifth anniversary of 9/11 approaches, Pentagon officials will briefly reprise the pre-Sept. 11 tour program, conducting tours for the public from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. this Saturday.

Pentagon tour guides will greet guests near the Memorial Gate, in the Pentagon's south parking lot, and escort them to the site where American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the building.

Just inside that entrance is the America's Heroes Memorial. Visitors also will view the site under construction that will contain the Pentagon memorial.

Parking restrictions will remain in effect, however. Those wishing to take the tour

and who have a Pentagon parking pass may park in their designated areas. All other visitors should use Metrorail and exit at the Pentagon stop.

The public tours are part of events commemorating the fifth anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the United States. The weekend's highlight is the America Supports You Freedom Walk on Sept. 10 at 6:30 p.m. The walk starts near the Washington Monument and ends at the Pentagon. More than 120 similar walks in all 50 states are scheduled to commemorate that day.

America Supports You spotlights ways the American people and corporate sector support U.S. service members.

# YOUR GUARD HISTORY 34th ID 45th ID

Sept. 9, 1943: Salerno, Italy—As part of the Allied invasion of Italy, the Americans land four divisions south of Naples. Three of these were the Guard's 34th (Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota), 36th (Texas) and 45th (Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Oklahoma) infantry divisions.

Little resistance was expected since the Italian government had surrendered just prior to the landings. However, strong German forces contest the invasion and inflict heavy causalities on the Americans. During this operation the 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry, 36th Infantry Division earns a Presidential Unit Citation for its determined advance in spite of concentrated enemy fire.

The 36th and 45th divisions would later take part in the invasion of southern France and end the war deep inside of Germany, while the 34th Division would continue fighting up the Italian "boot" securing the Po River Valley by war's end

#### Pentagon implements changes for improved agency cooperation

Pentagon officials unveiled a reorganization of the Defense Department's policy office Aug. 28. The reason: more interagency cooperation needed.

The reorganized office changes the geographic responsibility for policy, and it places cross-cutting functions under one chief.

Eric Edelman, undersecretary of defense for policy, said that the reorganization will allow DoD to better partner with colleagues in other agencies as well as focus on developing the capabilities needed for the war on terror.

The geographic area of responsibility

regarding policy has shifted. Europe and NATO, the Middle East and Africa will come under the assistant defense secretary for international security affairs.

Asia Pacific, South Asia and Central Asia will come under the assistant defense secretary for Asian and Pacific security affairs. Western hemisphere policy decisions will come under the assistant secretary of defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' security affairs.

The assistant secretary for special operations/ low intensity conflict will pick up responsibility for strategic capabilities and forces transformation.

The reorganization calls for appointing an assistant secretary for global security affairs. This cross-cutting office will oversee policy guidance for building partners capabilities, security cooperation, technical security policy, detainee affairs and POW/MIA affairs.

This is the first reorganization of the policy office since the fiscal 2002 National Defense Authorization Act established the assistant secretary for Homeland Defense.

Mr. Edelman said the reorganization will be phased in beginning Oct. 1, and conclude by March 2007.





#### Pinnacle Advance

Last year LTG Clyde Vaughn, Director of the Army National Guard worked with the National Committee of ESGR to develop a program to help Soldiers work with their employers to solicit employer support. The program is called "Pinnacle Advance". LTG Vaughn wrote to each Adjutant General to explain the program and ask their support in the implementation. Major General Wyatt then wrote to all OKARNG units emphasizing his desire that the program be implemented and supported and to also appoint a unit/detachment ESGR representative. This was done because leaders at all levels recognized the importance of a positive employee/employer relationship to insure the Soldier could continue a military career.

The heart of the program revolves around the unit representative. This is a Soldier in the unit assigned an additional duty of working with unit members to ensure the Pinnacle Advance program is supported. The unit representative will work with Soldiers, visit with employers, and advise the commander of best practices to implement Pinnacle Advance. The Oklahoma ESGR committee will assign a Military Liaison to work with the unit representative and commander to ensure all literature or other items associated with Pinnacle Advance are available to the unit.

The first phase of the program has been accomplished. National Committee ESGR sent each National Guard and Army Reserve unit enough literature for every Soldier to place in the hands of the employer. This literature describes the function of ESGR and asks the employer to fill out and return the tear off portion of the piece, mail it back in order to receive an ESGR Statement of Support. You can see a picture of the Statement of Support at http://www.esgr.org

Commanders, please work closely with your unit representative and ESGR Military Liaison to ensure Pinnacle Advance does what the program was designed to do. That is to keep the employer relations leg of the three legged stool (unit, family, job) strong and positive.

If you have not received the Pinnacle Advance literature from National ESGR, please call me at (405) 228-5275 and I will get the information to you.



Developing Priorities in the Rat Race
Does it ever seem like you have more
month at the end of your pay and more
to do at the end of your day? If so, you
are a full-fledged member of the human
rat race! There are times when we
simply have to step back and reassess
what our priorities are.

A group of friends went deer hunting and paired off in two's for the day. That night one of the hunters returned alone, staggering under the weight of a 200 pound deer. The group asked, "Where's John?" The lone man replied, "Oh, John had a stroke of some kind. He's a couple of miles back up the trail." "You left John lying there, and carried the deer back?" "Yeah, it was a tough call," nodded the hunter, "but I figured no one is going to steal John."

Such a story is a good illustration of how we can temporarily get our priorities out of place. How can we manage our time and lives better? I suggest evaluating your life by how much time you spend on the following:

1.Essentials- What are the essentials of your life? For me it would certainly be God and family. Rarely would I let something stand in the way of these. The "essentials" are areas that you MUST put your time, money and energy.

2.Important areas- As we mention these all of us may place aspects of our lives under different categories. Work is an important area. However, we also know that work is essential to take care of our families. Yet it is a means to fund and take care of our essentials. We must put as much as we can into the important areas without taking away (consistently) from what we consider essential.

3.Good things- There are so many things that are available for us to do and to enjoy. They are good things: time with friends, hobbies, material things. But we must keep them in perspective. They are only good if they enhance the essentials and not hinder them.

I, like many in Oklahoma, participated in the Hurricane Katrina operation in 2005. Between my time in New Orleans and then at Camp Maxey, Texas I was gone more than I had planned. It was important to fulfill my mission as chaplain. Several months prior I received notice that I was drawn for a special hunt at Salt Plains refuge. I had planned for this trip for a long time and had even paid the permit fee. It was a good thing. However, after having missed several soccer and basketball games of my two boys, I realized that what was needed most was time and energy spent on the essentials of my life...my family. I didn't go. Tough choice, but the right one for me at that time. All of us have choices to make. We must prioritize our lives to make sure the right people and things get the best we have to offer.

PRAYER: Lord, show me those things that should require the best I have to offer. Empower me to make the choices necessary to keep first things first. Amen.

#### Governor's Honor Guard is looking for sharp Soldiers and Airmen

The Governor's Honor Guard is looking for top-notch Soldiers to represent the State of Oklahoma and the Oklahoma National Guard. The Honor Guard participates in a wide variety of events, both military and civilian, throughout the year. This next year promises to be exciting, as we inaugurate a governor in January and celebrate Oklahoma's centennial year by participation in several national events, ie: 2007 EANGUS Conference in August.

Participation requires willingness to give extra time and effort to appearance, mission accomplishment, and rehearsals. Missions include posting and retiring the Colors, as well as various other flag and

memorial ceremonies. An affinity for drill and ceremonies is an asset. Uniform is provided, but acceptance of an element of personal expense is to be expected.

Selection is to be considered an honor. Soldiers who meet physical and appearance standards; are extra-sharp; and ultra-friendly Guardsmen are encouraged to seek additional information. New members are to be selected by 30 September 2006. For additional information, please consective.

Sgt. 1st Class Barbara Atkinson at: barbara.atkinson@us.army.mil or kbratk@earthlink.net 405-348-5614

#### **Guard Your Benefits**

JFHQ Full-Time State Benefits Advisor (SBA)

New Pay Entitlements Recently Implemented Two new pay entitlements have recently been introduced. Section 642 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY2006 authorized the payment of Combat Related Injury Rehabilitation Pay (CIP). The Reserve Income Replacement Program (RIRP) was enacted by Section 614 of the NDAA for FY06 (Public Law 109-163, 119 Stat. 3292, January 6, 2006).

CIP is a special pay for members hospitalized during rehabilitation from wounds, injuries, and/or illness incurred in a combat operation or combat zone after having been evacuated from theater as a result of those wounds, injuries or illness.

The coordination for payment of CIP will be between the Office of the Army Surgeon General and the Defense Finance and Accounting Station - Indiana (DFAS-IN). The coordination and payment will occur while the military member is hospitalized and while they are still on active duty.

CIP is \$430 per month minus Hostile Fire/Imminent Danger Pay (HF/IDP) paid to the member that month. The \$430 is the sum of what members in Iraq and Afghanistan are receiving in TDY Incidental Expenses (IE) allowance (\$105/month), Hazardous Duty Pay-Location (HDP/L) (\$100/month), and the HF/IDP (\$225/month).

CIP is payable each time a member is evacuated from the combat theater and hospitalized for treatment due to wounds, injuries or illness incurred while in a combat operation or in a combat zone.

HF/IDP continues for up to three additional months for members hospitalized for the treatment of an injury or wound incurred as a result of hostile fire in a combat zone or operation. While HF/IDP is payable during these months, CIP will be offset by the HF/IDP amount (i.e., \$225). The CIP portion will therefore be \$205.

CIP may be paid in addition to any other pay and allowance to which the member is entitled or authorized and will be paid at the full monthly rate for any month that member is eligible for the pay in the full amount. For instance, if a member is still hospitalized beyond the three months that HF/IDP is payable, the CIP payment will be the full \$430.

CIP stops once Traumatic SGLI is paid by the Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (T-SGLI). Payment of CIP also stops when the member is no longer "hospitalized" (as defined in the March 23, 2006 OUSD memo), even if the member is sent home to continue rehabilitation.

Need a Refresher on TSGLI? TSGLI is the insurance benefit ranging from \$25,000 to \$100,000 based on 44 categories of

The TSGLI and SGLI coverage are linked so an individual who selects one will automatically have the other. TSGLI premiums are \$1 monthly added to the SGLI premium.

Effective 1 December 2005, any member who has SGLI will be insured

Section 910 of the NDAA FY-2006 requires the military to make up the difference

The Reserve Income Replacement Program (RIRP) will pay eligible National Guard & Reserve members mobilized for extended or frequent periods the difference between their monthly civilian pre-mobilization income and their current total monthly military compensation. Payments are not automatic. Guard & Reserve members must apply for the RIRP thorough their service personnel offices. To qualify for RIRP, servicemembers must:

Be serving on active duty in an involuntary status and have completed 18 continuous months of involuntary active duty, or

Have completed 24 cumulative months of involuntary active duty within the last 60

Be serving on involuntary active duty for a period of 180 days or more that starts within six months of separation from a previous period on involuntary active duty for at least 180 days.

Guard and reserve members serving on involuntary active duty and earning at least \$50 less than their normal civilian income each month must verify eligibility for this benefit through their military service's personnel system, using a new DD form created for this

Financial records submitted with the RIRP application must include the member's most recent federal income tax return or other record of earnings that shows gross income during the 12 months before the member's mobilization, officials said.

RIRP is effective as of August 1, 2006, the first full month following the 180-day period after enactment of P.L. 109-163. Income replacement payments will be made only for full months of qualifying involuntary active

duty performed from August 2006 through December 2008.

The first RIRP payments for eligible service members will occur in September 2006, for duty performed in August 2006 (the first full month authorized for payments). RIRP payments will be made to an eligible member on a monthly basis. RIRP payments may not exceed \$3,000 per month.

The authority for RIRP will expire Dec. 31,

For more detailed information about RIRP or assistance in determining/verifying your RIRP eligibility, please call your unit or your organization/Major Command personnel section. You may also visit the Reserve Affairs website and read more about the program at http://www.dod.mil/ra/#.

POC for the RIRP for the Army National Guard is Master Sgt. David Burford, (405) 228-5093, email: david.burford@us.army.mil.

#### VTAP briefing planned in Broken Arrow

The next Veterans Assistance Transition Program (VTAP) session will be conducted on October 28, 2006, 0800-1700, at the Tulsa Technology Center in Broken Arrow. It will target members of the National Guard and Reserves who have returned from deployment and who live in or near the Tulsa area. Spouses/Significant Others are also invited to

The intent of the VTAP is to help our Guard members who have returned from deployment in their transition from active duty back to civilian life. The VTAP coalition is headed by the VA and includes members from organizations such as TRICARE, the Dept of Labor, and many more. The Oklahoma National Guard (OKNG) will have personnel from the following offices represented at VTAP sessions: Family Program Office (FPO), Air Wing Family Coordinators, OKARNG Education Department (Specifically for State Tuition Waiver and State Tuition Assistance), TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) presented by one of the TRS Verification Officials, the Full-Time Chaplain and the State Benefits Advisor (SBA). ESGR will be included with the DOL/Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) because of their close association.

Any questions regarding this program can be directed to our State Benefits Advisor, Mrs. Sue Stice, (405)228-5389, or our Family Programs Officer, Maj. Lindy White, (405)228-

#### Company B, 111 Medical Battalion hosts change of command

Story and photo by Spc. Jason Hinton, 105th MPAD, Oklahoma Army National Guard

Soldiers of the Oklahoma Army National Guard's Company B, 111th Area Service Medical Battalion gathered in Broken Arrow recently to bid farewell to one leader and welcome another. Cpt. Barry Calvert, of Purcell, accepted the flag of command from Maj. Aubrey Henshaw III, who was recently assigned to the Medical Detachment, Oklahoma Army National Guard, as the State Dental Surgeon.

"I am very excited about this opportunity", Calvert said of his new command, "I've looked forward to commanding this unit for years". Calvert went on to say; "I have 100% confidence that this unit can and will perform any mission put in front of it".

Calvert brings over 19 years of military experience to the Company. In 1990, he deployed to Saudi Arabia as a part of Operation Desert Shield/Storm; after his return to the United States Calvert continued his education at Oklahoma



Incoming commander of Company B, 111th Area Medical Service Battalion, Cpt. Barry Calvert accepts the unit colors from Maj. Miguel Ramos, during the change of command ceremony.

State University where he completed both his Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy and the ROTC program.

During the ceremony, outgoing commander Maj. Aubrey Henshaw spoke about his experiences as the commander of the unit, "The past two years as commander have been the most rewarding and educational of my military career".

Aubrey has set the bar high for himself as the Oklahoma Army National Guard's State Dental Surgeon. Among his goals is increasing dental coverage for Soldiers in the Oklahoma Army National Guard and reducing the number of Soldiers classified as class three dental cases. Soldiers classified as class three cannot deploy with their units because they require dental care that is not readily available under deployment conditions. Aubrey expanded on this goal by saying; "A reduction in the number of Soldiers with class three dental problems will positively impact the readiness of units in the Oklahoma Army National Guard".

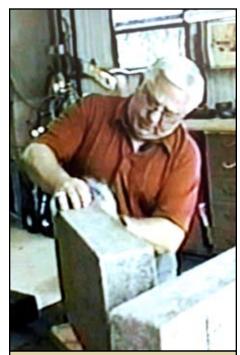
# Retired Oklahoma Army Guardsman saves veteran's headstones from destruction Story by 1st Lt. Geoff Legler, Oklahoma Army National Guard Office of Public Affairs

Retired Master Sgt. Ron Baker received a call from his sister, several weeks ago. She told him that one of her neighbors in Midwest City had found two military grave markers behind his house that had been placed upside down and used as steps. The neighbor wanted to give the markers back to the families of the deceased service members, but had no idea who he should contact.

Baker took control of the headstones and contacted the Veteran's Administration to see if they knew where the marks were supposed to be. The VA told him that they had no information on either of the markers and he should destroy them. To Baker, this was an unacceptable.

Baker began his own investigation and soon found an obituary from 1960 on an Oklahoma news website for Phillip I. Rafferty. This was one of the deceased veterans whose headstone Baker had. But, even with this obituary, Baker was unable to find Rafferty's family and he still had no leads on the family of Joe Nathan Lee who was the owner of the other marker.

Baker spent several more days looking for any trace of either of the men's families,



Retired Master Sqt. Ron Baker attempts to clean the years of neglect off of two military headstones. The headstones had been used as steps outside a home in Midwest City.

PHOTO: VidCap from News Channel 4

before turning to the local media for help. Two local television stations aired Baker's story on their evening newscasts. Within 30 minutes of the stories airing, Baker received phone calls from the families of both men.

Rafferty's family told Baker that Phillip Rafferty's headstone had been replaced and they did not want the original one. Lee's family, on the other hand, was overjoyed at the news that Joe Nathan's headstone had been found.

Baker made arrangements to have both of the headstones cleaned and reconditioned. He then delivered Joe Nathan Lee's headstone to his family and helped them to return it to its proper place at the head of his grave.

Since Phillip Rafferty's family did not want his original headstone Baker made arrangements with the Oklahoma Military Department to have it permanently placed at the Union Soldier's Cemetery in Oklahoma City.

When asked why he put forth so much effort for two people he had never met, Baker simply replied, "Because it was the right thing to do."

#### Purple Heart Award

Continued from page 7

she was wearing. The morning of the attack, she was issued a flame retardant suit and dad just thanks God she was wearing it.

"There's no doubt it saved my life," Spc. Stone said.

Sgt. Stone joined the Guard in 1983 and served six years. He got out and went into business for himself repairing small appliances. After a 14-year break in service, he said he decided to join back up when his oldest daughter, Melissa, came home one day and told him she had joined.

Sgt. Stone, his son, Neal Harvey, a third year ROTC cadet at the University of Central Oklahoma, and Spc. Stone soon followed suit.

"I was really getting tired of the appliance business by then and I was ready to go back in the Guard," Sgt. Stone said. "Melissa's joining really caused a snowball effect. I've got a niece and a nephew in the Guard too."

When Sgt. Stone found out his daughter was going to Iraq, his first thought was "I really wanted to go with them."

Sgt. Stone was himself a member of the 1345th Transportation Company when Operation Iraqi Freedom kicked off in March 2003. The unit mobilized and spent three months at Fort Sill, Okla., before being demobilized.

"I was nervous about her going," Sgt. Stone said. "As a father, who wouldn't be? I've just got faith things will work out."

He said his daughter Melissa, who spent three years in the Guard before joining the active duty Army, had already spent a year in Baghdad with the 320th Engineering Company out of Hanau, Germany.

"You really don't expect anything like this will ever happen to you," Spc. Stone said. "It doesn't really hit you until you're getting the award the significance it has. I think it shows people appreciate your sacrifice."

Of his daughter's award, Sgt. Stone said, "I'm proud...and thankful she's still here. She wanted more than anything to stay over there with her friends. But, obviously, she can't do anything more for this war. Her injuries just won't allow her to. But she did her part."

The irony to all of this, Sgt. Stone said, is he's got two daughters who have both been to war and he's yet to go.

"I think Spc. Stone has demonstrated the type of Soldier we all wish we could be," said Oklahoma Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt. "She knows she's in exclusive company now and I'm extremely proud of her. Her contribution represents what the Oklahoma National Guard is all about."

The 1345th Transportation Company

mobilized in March in support of the Global War on Terrorism. After additional training at Fort Bliss, Texas, the unit deployed in June to Iraq.

Their year-long deployment consists of moving critical supplies and equipment in support of U.S. and coalition forces in northern Iraq.

Spc. Herndon and Sgt. Johnson are both Iraqi Freedom veterans, having previously completed a one-year deployment with the 1245th Transportation Company out of Ardmore, Okla., in 2003-2004.

Spc. Herndon is expected to receive his Purple Heart during a ceremony in the next few weeks.

Col. Kenneth Moore, commander of 90th Troop Command, which has oversight responsibility for the 1345th Transportation Company and the 1245th Transportation Company, said their mission in Iraq is and continues to be an important one.

"They've performed extremely well," Col. Moore said. "Moving equipment and supplies is an important mission. But in my opinion, everyone there (in Iraq) is a warfighter first and I think Spc. Stone exemplifies that.

"Her attitude has been great and she seems undaunted by this. She is receiving some of the best care in the world."

#### Do you know your State-Sponsored Life Insurance (SSLI) enrollment options?

Since June 2006, several thousand members have selected SSLI and submitted enrollment forms. Once the member's enrollment form is approved by the insurance carrier a certificate of insurance will be issued for each SSLI plan selected. Some certificates have already been issued and mailed to the home address.

**NGAOK** sponsors five different SSLI plans underwritten by two different insurance companies; New York Life **Insurance Company underwrites the** Militia Insurance Trust Plan and the USBA Level to Age 50, Lean 15 and **Generation 3 Group Life Plans. Five** Star Life Insurance Company underwrites the AFBA Better Alternative Group Life Plan.

Over 50% of those who have enrolled have selected two or three SSLI Group Life Plans. Again, with each SSLI Plan, a separate individual certificate of insurance will be issued.

Example 1: if a member selected the family coverage, and the coverage was approved by the insurer(s), the member will receive a certificate of insurance for \$250,000 for the member and \$100,000 on his/her spouse from AFBA for their Better Alternative Plan and a certificate of insurance for \$10,000 for the member, \$5,000 on his/her spouse and \$5,000 for their children from the Militia Insurance Trust Plan. They may not arrive at the member's home at the same time.

Example 2: if a member selected \$500,000 of Jumbo coverage and

the coverage was approved by the insurer(s), the member will receive a \$250,000 certificate of insurance from AFBA for their Better Alternative Plan and a \$250.000 certificate of insurance from USBA for their Level to 50 Plan. They may not arrive at the member's home at the same time.

Some members or spouses enrollment forms require medical underwriting for approval. This will delay the process until the insurer approves the coverage. If the coverage is not approved, the member will be notified directly from the insurance company.

Please call 800-633-8333 for questions on the status of your enrollment or 866-399-0180 if you would like to speak with Col (Ret) Dale Carney.

# Sooners and Ducks play game in Afghanistan and Sooners win Story and photos by CPLTodd Larkin, 1st Battalion, 180th Infantry Public Affairs NCO

On Saturday, September 16th, football players from Oklahoma and Oregon met on the field to play four hard fought

quarters and determine who had the better football team. But this game was not played at Autzen Stadium in Eugene, Ore. it was played at Camp Phoenix, Afghanistan.

Just about 12 hours before the University of Oklahoma's Sooners and the University of Oregon's Ducks kicked off in Eugene, 30 Soldiers from the 1st, Battalion, 180th Infantry of the Oklahoma Army National Guard and the 41st Infantry Brigade, Oregon Army National Guard, kicked-off their own flag

the 180th work 12-16 hours in grueling conductions with little time for fun, but today was not most days. On this sunny little fun stuffing the Ducks.

The game started out pretty slow for the Sooners as they fell behind with an

> early Oregon touchdown. The Sooners finally scored in the second quarter with a long pass from a former Texas Tech Red Raider 2nd Lt. Seth Freo to Spc. Keith Johnson both members of Company D, 180th.

After the half and a few player changes, the big tightend Cpl. Paul Dietrich, also of Company D, caught a short dump from Spc. Colt Floyd of Headquarters Company and took it the length of the field for another touchdown. The Sooners were now ahead by seven







football game within the walls of their compound in Afghanistan. Decked out in Sooner jerseys and with a few 200 pound linemen it was pretty close to the real deal and a chance to show Oregon first hand just how the Sooners play football.

With no grass on the field, no outrageous green uniforms on the Ducks, and definitely no Adrian Peterson, this game would show the Oregonians the meaning of the term "Sooner Magic". It was also a chance for the men of the 180th to let their

hair down and blow off some steam... Most days in Afghanistan the men of



Saturday the Soldiers had the opportunity to let out a little aggression and have a

with the score being Sooners 14, Duck seven.

On the Sooners final drive Headquarters Company Medic Sgt. Brian Wade had three carries that ended on a five yard touchdown run. The final touchdown for the Ducks came during the final 20 seconds of the game.

In the end, the 180th's Sooners won 21-14, but amid much controversy, the OU Sooners fell a little short in Eugene, so the men of the 180 are expecting a long nine months of harassment

from their Oregonian counterparts before returning home next summer.

**How to Avoid Identity Theft** 

Courtesy of USAA

With one unfortunate incident, 26.5 million U.S. veterans had their personal information compromised, and it could just as easily happen to anyone of us. The USAA Educational Foundation (www.usaaedfoundation. org) offers the tips below to help military members protect themselves from identity theft and detect if they've been a victim.

Nothing you can do will guarantee protection against identity theft in all circumstances. However, you can minimize your risk by managing personal information with care and caution.









Memorize your Social Security number. Never carry your Social Security card in your wallet



Store your wallet or purse in a secure location while at work or public places such as



Buy a cross-cut shredder. Use it as a secure means of disposal for documents with personal or financial information-such as unsolicited credit card applications, credit receipts or



Memorize your PINs. Do not write them down unless you must. Never keep them with their cards, and do not share them with anyone. If possible, do not use the same PIN for multiple cards or services.



Do not provide personal information over the phone, e-mail or Internet unless the recipient is a known and trusted source.



Make sure the Web site uses encryption technology to safeguard your information. Most Web sites provide some acknowledgement that they are using encryption to transfer financial information. This acknowledgement may appear as a yellow padlock symbol in the status bar of your browser or a pop-up window indicating an encrypted or secured site.



Call the credit reporting agencies at (888) 50PTOUT or (888) 567-8688 to remove your name from all mailing lists the agencies supply to direct marketers.



Deposit checks directly to your bank account. Do not mail checks from your home mailbox if it is unsecured.



Do not have unnecessary personal information, such as Social Security or driver's license numbers, printed on personal checks.



Do business with responsible companies that take steps to protect their customers from

#### HOW TO DETECT ID THEF

If you are a victim of identity theft, you can minimize damage to your name, finances, and credit history by detecting it early. To do so, you should begin taking the following steps immediately.



#### MONITOR FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Carefully monitor every statement from your bank, credit card company, and other financial institutions. Review transactions carefully for unexplained charges or withdrawals, and dispute anything that looks suspicious. This is the most common way victims discover misuse of their identity.



#### REVIEW YOUR CREDIT REPORT

Order your credit report from any of the three credit reporting agencies at least once each year, and review it carefully. Make sure all personal information is correct, such as names, addresses, and phone numbers. Make sure all listed accounts are yours. Check inquiries on your report to see if they look suspicious or seem excessive.



#### **EXAMINE YOUR MAIL**

Scrutinize your mail for signs of identity theft, Have you received credit cards for which you did not apply? Are bills or bank account statements missing? Have you failed to receive new credit cards as expected when current cards are about to expire? Have you received letters from debt collectors or businesses about merchandise or services you did not purchase?

If any of these situations arise, follow up quickly with creditors. An identity thief may be tampering with your accounts.

The USAA Educational Foundation, a nonprofit organization, does not endorse or promote any commercial product, service, or supplier. www.usaaedfoundation.org

#### **National Guard Announces** TRICARE Reserve Select

By MAJ Liz Kirby and Ms. Sue Pinto

The National Guard is concerned about the well-being of its Servicemembers and their families, which is why the new TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) program is being initiated. The program will now help these individuals receive the healthcare they deserve by allowing every member of the Selected Reserve the option to purchase health coverage from TRICARE.

TRS was originally authorized in NDAA 05 as a premium-based TRICARE Standard-like benefit for National Guard members who supported a contingency operation. NDAA 06 provides enhancements to the original TRS and allows ALL National Guard members in the Selected Reserve to purchase TRICARE Standard coverage. TRS will be implemented during Summer 2006 as a three-tiered benefit with separate qualification requirements and premium rates for each tier.



Selected reserve members must work with their service personnel offices to determine which one of three TRS tiers they qualify for. They must have their eligibility verified by their service personnel office and complete the Department of Defense Form 2895, "Agreement to Serve in the Selected Reserve for TRICARE Reserve Select" before they can submit their application to purchase TRS coverage. See your MILPO for more information about how to sign up for TRS. Only qualified selected reserve members may submit an enrollment form with first month's premium payment to purchase coverage.



National Guard member may purchase one full year of TRS Tier 1 coverage for each 90-day period of continuous active duty for contingency.

28% of Total Premium \* COST:

> Member Only = \$81.00/mo. Member+Family = \$253.00/mo.

(Prices based on 2006 figures)



National Guard members may purchase Tier 3 if they agree to remain a member of the Selected Reserve and do not qualify or have not elected to purchase TRS Tier 1 or Tier 2 health care coverage (Tier 3 is for all others).

85% of Total Premium \* COST:

> Member Only = \$247.00/mo. Member+Family = \$767.41/mo.

(Prices based on 2006 figures)



National Guard member may purchase Tier 2 if they agree to remain a member of the Selected Reserve and meet one of the following criteria:

- \* National Guard member is receiving unemployment compensation
- \* National Guard member is not eligible for an employer-sponsored health plan
- \* National Guard member is self-employed

COST: 50% of Total Premium \*

> Member Only = \$145.29/mo. Member+Family = \$451.42/mo.

(Prices based on 2006 figures)

For more information, visit:

www.defenselink.mil/ra www.tricare.osd.mil

\*The total cost of the Department of Defense (DoD) premium as determined by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (ASD H/A).

# VETERANS TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



#### VTAP WORKSHOP

- ·One full day in length
- Informative briefings
- Personalized assistance

Date: October 28, 2006 Time: 8:00am - 5:00pm

#### Tulsa Technology Center

**Broken Arrow Campus** 

# VETERANS TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

#### \* PURPOSE

The VTAP concept was developed to ensure Oklahoma's Reserve and Guard personnel, and their spouses, are fully informed of their benefits and entitlements, and are offered indepth transition assistance upon their return home from worldwide mobilizations.

# \* VITAL INFORMATION PROVIDED

- Veterans benefits
- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment
- DoD health care
- VA health care
- Employment and Training
- Mental well being / counseling
- Family programs
- State government jobs

#### \* PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

- Department of Labor
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Department of Defense
- Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs
- Oklahoma State Accrediting Agency
- National Guard State Benefits Advisor
- Chaplains
- Employer Support for Guard and Reserve
- Veterans Upward Bound
- Oklahoma Employment Security Commission
- Employer Support for Guard and Reserve
- Oklahoma Office of Personnel Management